



**Testimony Requesting to Add HB6030 to HB6842**  
**Francine Coss, Superintendent of Schools, Thomaston, CT**

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Respectfully submitted to the Education Committee by the Superintendent of Schools  
for presentation during the March 8, 2023 Public Hearing

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**Testimony to the Education Committee ([EDtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:EDtestimony@cga.ct.gov)) on Proposed House Bill 6842. Respectfully Submitted by Francine Coss ([FCoss@thomastonschools.org](mailto:FCoss@thomastonschools.org)) Superintendent of Schools, Thomaston, Connecticut.**

Chairpersons McCrory and Currey, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on HB6842 *AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND EXPANSION OF THE CT GROWN FOR CT KIDS GRANT PROGRAM.*

My testimony is presented in support of incorporating the language of Proposed House Bill 6030 *AN ACT CONCERNING THE NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF SCHOOL LUNCHES AND BREAKFASTS* into HB6842.

The purpose of HB6030 is “[t]o post the nutritional value of school lunches and breakfasts for the purpose of promoting healthy eating habits by students.” which complements the purpose of HB6842.

Specifically, I am requesting that HB6842 be amended to include:

“That chapter 169 of the general statutes be amended to require each local and regional board of education to post the nutritional value of school lunches and breakfasts in the school cafeteria or other central place of consumption.”

**Background**

The Thomaston Center School Learning Enrichment Academic Program (L.E.A.P.) students presented a bill proposal to Representative Piscopo related to posting nutritional information for school breakfasts and lunches. On January 18, 2023, Representative Piscopo introduced House Bill 6030 to the General Assembly and soon after it was referred to the Joint Committee on Education.

On February 8, 2023, the Thomaston Center School L.E.A.P. students visited the Capitol and Representative Piscopo announced their presence during a formal meeting of the General Assembly. Soon after that announcement, the L.E.A.P. students had lunch in the Legislative Office Building cafeteria where, to their excitement, they found a binder of nutritional facts on display for Legislators and guests to read (see photo).



*This binder is on display in the LOB cafeteria and contains the very same information that HB6030 is requiring.*

On February 13, 2023, the Thomaston Center School L.E.A.P. students presented HB6030 to the Thomaston Board of Education. Representative John Piscopo and Senator Henri Martin followed the student presentation with oral commentary in favor of formal action by the Thomaston Board of Education.

The Thomaston Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution regarding the “Posting of Nutritional Value of School Lunches and Breakfasts, as presented, and in support of the Thomaston Center School Learning Enrichment Academic Program Students Proposed

Legislation Connecticut House Bill 6030, An Act Concerning the Nutritional Value of School Lunches and Breakfasts.”

The Thomaston Board of Education, like the Connecticut General Assembly, supports matters of Governance that lead to a Legislative-School Board Partnership which beacons collaboration between school boards and Legislators and which provides Legislators with objective analysis of proposed School Board-related legislation. This testimony ventures to provide such analysis of HB6030.

The requirements of HB6030 do not impose additional cost or responsibility on local or regional boards of education as the nutritional value of school lunches and breakfasts are regularly reviewed, scrutinized and defined as part of the lunch and breakfast menu development process.

The task of posting nutritional values of school lunches and breakfasts is nominal as meals typically repeat throughout the school year and, at times, even repeat across a single month of school. This nominal task neither produces a hardship for local and regional boards of education nor its employees or contractors. The posting of the nutritional values of school lunches and breakfasts in the school cafeteria or central place of consumption provides students with information that could promote healthy eating habits; similar to the information currently provided to Legislators and guests who eat at the LOB cafeteria

#### Conclusion

Sponsoring HB6030 demonstrates Representative Piscopo’s support of the innovative learning practices of Thomaston Public Schools’ L.E.A.P. program and the initiative taken by the L.E.A.P. students who proposed legislation to inform all students of the nutritional value of school lunches and breakfasts. Attending and providing oral comment during the February Board of Education meeting gives additional proof of Representative Piscopo’s support of HB6030 as well as Senator Henri Martin’s support of the same.

Because of all this, my request to incorporate the language of HB6030 into HB6842 should be of exceptional interest to the Education Committee. Moreover, having the Education Committee include the language from HB6030 in HB6842 validates innovative learning practices that serve as an example for other school districts.

I ask on behalf of Representative Piscopo, the Thomaston Board of Education, and the L.E.A.P. students of Thomaston Center School that HB6842 be amended to include the full contents of HB6030 to require each local and regional board of education to post the nutritional value of school lunches and breakfasts in the school cafeteria or other central place of consumption.

#### Additional Information

The Learning Enrichment Academic Program (L.E.A.P.) was created to challenge Thomaston Center School students in innovative ways and to create student agency (set of beliefs that demonstrate students are effective, cognitively-able, and have a voice and choice in their learning).